connections in Orissa. Sir, there are about 14 lakh connections in Orissa. Sir, by the end of this year, we will be adding, the BSNL alone will be adding about 7.95 lakhs additional phones, including 40,000 WLL connections. This is only the BSNL's data. I am sure, the private operators will also add to this number. So, we are expecting that somewhere around 12 lakh phones are to be added in Orissa by this year. Sir, nearly 95 per cent of the existing connections are to be added in the coming year.

श्री सुरेन्द्र लाठः सभापति महोदय, मंत्री महोदय ने अपने रेप्लाई में कहा है कि उड़ीसा में 14,84,248 फोन हैं। मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूं कि इन 14,84,248 फोन्स में से कितने फोन डब्लूएलएल में हैं और कितने फोन मोबाइल्स में हैं? इन फोन्स के बाद लैंड लाइन फोन्स में कितने वेटिंग लिस्ट में हैं। डब्ल्यूएलएल फोन में कितनी वेटिंग लिस्ट है? इन सबके बाद फोन ऑन डिमांड वे कब तक आरंभ करने वाले हैं?

SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN: Sir, I have the data with me. The total number of landline phones is 7,66,391, the number of WLL phones is 97,749, the number of mobile phones is 6,20,188. That comes to a total of 14,84,248. There is a waiting list of around 45,000 in Orissa. But, Sir I would like to say that we are into the process, and we are looking very positively at adding nearly about 7.5 lakhs by December this year. The hon. Member may rest assured that we are looking at Orissa and we shall definitely try to increase the connectivity in Orissa.

Level of scientific research in the country

*168. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the recent media reports that the Indian Scientist is a case of pointless and indolent research;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps to be taken to rejuvenate the level of scientific research in the Universities and various scientific institutes of excellence and make them professionally useful for developing technology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The Government does not agree that the Indian Scientist is a case of pointless and indolent research. On the other hand, considering the limited resources and facilities available for research, the Indian scientists have indeed performed well during the last five decades. The Green and the White Revolutions have converted India into a food surplus country. Our capabilities in the areas of space and nuclear research are well-known examples of what Indian science has achieved in the past. More recently, the Indian scientists and technologists have demonstrated their capabilities in several areas of emerging technologies such as the production of the first genetically engineered Hepatitis-B Vaccine, the indigenous development of small civilian aircrafts, ocean-based desalination plants for fresh drinking water, development of new drugs for diseases of importance to this country, such as tuberculosis, etc. These achievements indeed place India on a platform of confidence as we enter the 21st century. We foresee major developments through public-private partnerships resulting in increased allocation of resources to scientific research and thus to increased contribution to the national economy.

(c) Universities are the largest pool of research manpower. The Government of India, on its part, has taken a number of steps to rejuvenate and promote scientific research in universities and other scientific institutes of excellence. The Plan Allocation of scientific departments has gone up from about Rs. 12000 crore in the Ninth Plan to about Rs. 25000 crore in the Tenth Plan. The Research Infrastructure programme of DST is a targeted programme to upgrade the laboratory infrastructrue in universities and other higher educational institutions. Several institutions, centres of excellence and facilities in emerging and frontline areas have also been established; for example, in the areas of Brain Research, Marine Biotechnology, Stem Cell and Tissue Engineering, Soft Computing, Water Resources Development, Nanophosphors, Display Technology, Fuel Cell Technology, Ultrafast Processes, Protein Research, etc.

The Government has also started some novel programmes to make our higher educational institutions professionally even more useful for developing technology. The DST programme of manpower development in collaboration with industry enhances the quality of technical education and makes it relevant for the industry through well-designed courses developed in close association with participating industries. A large network of S&T Entrepreneurship Parks and Technology Business Incubators has been established to synergize the technical expertise of engineering

institutions and the commercial spirit of entrepreneurs for technology development and commercialization. A large number of technology development projects are now being jointly undertaken by higher educational institutions and industries. All these are strong pointers towards improvement in indigenous capabilities for technology development.

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Sir, I am thankful to the hon. Minister that he has replied in detail while refuting the media reports of indolent research being undertaken by scientists in this country. But I am sure that you would agree, and the entire House would agree with me, at least, in respect of one area that is of great importance to the nation. The Indian Meteorological Department in its research, the CSIR Centre at Chennai in particular, the CSIR centre for Mathematical Modelling and Computer Simulation which is supposed to make predictions about floods, drought and other natural calamities, have altogether failed, and there are reports that it has become a form of roulette.

Now, if it is a form of roulette, what steps is the Minister and his department going to take to augment the situation so that people at large can get the right information at the right time? That is my first question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is quite clear, let him reply.

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Sir, I wish to inform the hon. Member that this is an issue, which I had myself raised about eight months ago and said that that Meteorological Department needs upgradation.

I might inform the hon. Member that the problems that we have are basically problems of lack of investment in infrastructure. I shall give you an example. For instance, in the area of super computers, Sir, we have a super computer, which has a capacity of three terra watts, whereas the super computers in Europe and America have a capacity of 2500 terra watts. Now, with a three-terra computer, how do you expect our scientists to give miso-scale predictions?

Sir, when we are talking about predictions, large the area, more inaccurate the prediction. Narrower the area, which is called miso-scaling, better the prediction. Now, we have a miso-scale of 50 kilometres, whereas in other countries, miso-scaling is of five kilometres. So, it is impossible to predict. We need to have automatic weather stations, but we don't have them. We need to have automatic rain-gauges, but we don't have them.

We need an investment of, at least, Rs.1500 crores. We have already sent a plan to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission has agreed to it in principle. Sir, you might have seen it on the television the other day, as would have most Members, that the Japanese satellite was able to get the actual configuration on the Mumbai city when the flood took place. Now, the fact that that particular configuration was available through satellite happended to be a matter of chance. But even if we had the best equipment in the world, we could not have predicted the cloud burst in Mumbai more than three hours in advance.

As far as flooding and other things are concerned, apart from predictions, we need infrastructure at the ground to deal with the issue of flooding. So, we, at our level, are trying to restructure the entire department. I think that we should not have a Meteorological Department in this country; we should have a department about sciences, because meteorology, climate etc. depends on oceans, depends on earth and, depends on space. So, it is the configuration of all the three together. We are, in fact, mooting a proposal for having a Department of Earth Sciences and we are trying to take care of the problems that the hon. Members placed before us.

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: I am fully in agreement with the hon. Minister, but I would like to ask whether the hon. Minister is contemplating the development of an infrastructure by configuration of all the scientific departments to work on specific subjects in only one laboratory. I am told that different laboratories are working at cross-directions and, therefore, we are using our money, but we are not getting the desired results. This is part one. And, part two, Sir, I am sure that the hon. Minister....

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your question?

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Yes, Sir, I am just putting the question. Sir, hon. Minister is mindful that the research workers or the research scientists, who join the laboratories after post-graduation and who are essentially bright students, don't get right remuneration even to survive. I would like to ask whether hon. Minister is considering to improve their salary structure or not with immediate effect.

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Sir, first of all, as far as part (a) of the question is concerned, whether we want all the Departments to work together, we have a separate Department for medium-scale predictions which is NCMWRF. We have a separate Meteorological Depertment for long-range predictions. And, these are two separate activities. We need not combine

them together. But, once we have the Department of Earth Sciences, then the R&D will be honed and directed towards one particular focus.

As far as the second part of the question is concerned, that is really the problem that is facing the scientific community of this country. Sir, I might mention to you that we talk about infrastructure all the time, and we only talk about physical infrastructure. But, I think, the more important need of the country, the prime need of the country, is human infrastructure and we are not investing enough in human infrastructure. I might give you an example, Sir. Talking about R&D, we spend in this country, 3 billion dollars for R&D annually. The United States spends 244 billion dollars. Japan spends 109 billion dollars. Canada spends 10 billion dollars. South Korea spends 8.9 billion dollars. Pfizer spends 5 billion dollars. Microsoft spends 6 billion dollars. And we, as a nation, spend 3 billion dollars and we want our scientists to do miracles in this country. It is time that we take note of the fact that we are not providing the kind of services that we need to provide for the scientific community in this country. And, yet, Sir, I might tell you that the per capita GDP of Indian scientist is the highest in the world, as far as publications are concerned. So, our output per scientist is the highest in the world, but we are not giving them a level-playing field. I urge the Government and Prime Minister, who is sitting here, to look at this issue and give to the scientists...*(Interruptions)*....No, because this has to be a national consensus. It is not the time to criticise the scientific community. We should give them the power. And, talking about recruitment, Sir, you know that we have the policy in the Government of India that we cannot recruit more people. We can only recruit somebody when someone retires. How do we induct young people? We need new scientists in nano-technology. We need new scientists in bio-technology. We need nano-tech, bio-tech. We need stem cell research. Where are we going to get the recruits if we have a recruitment policy of the Government of India that does not allow us to recruit scientists? And, I agree with the hon. Member that we need more recruitment; we need better salaries.

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Sir, let the hon. Prime Minister speak on this issue.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, the Minister has very rightly described the picture. India has got one of the best scientific pools in the world. But, the only constraint is lack of funds and resources. I request the hon. Prime Minister because recently, he has expressed concern over the quality of scientific education in the Universities, a couple of days back. So, as a suggestion to the Prime Minister, the entire House requests

you to provide more funds for this field because the development of the country depends on the science, as Shri C.V. Raman said.

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Sir, I have a small request. There is a Calling Attention Motion which has been submitted. Let a discussion take place next week, and then, let the House know what is needed and the House can unanimously, on a consensus basis, give the direction to the nation as to where science must go in this country.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, my supplementary is...

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no need of any supplementary now; let the motion come. Next Question.

*169. [The questioner (Shri Ramadhar Kashyap) was absent. for answer *vide* page 40 infra.]

MMS clips

*170. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that instances of titillating MMS clips have been on the rise;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the technology in the area of electronic communication has developed to such an extent that it is capable of being misused and abused;

(d) whether there is any legislation to deal with the abuse of electronic data which has been doctored;

(e) whether Government propose to suitably amend the Information Technology Act of 2000 to deal with the day-to-day problems of offensive electronic messages; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) to (f) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Government does not directly regulate such activities. However, it is aware of the recent media reports in this regard.